



Partnering with IEP Students to Improve Readability of a Flu Health Document

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Abstract

Partnering with the Intensive English Program (IEP) students at the University of Dayton, an informational document about influenza produced by the Iowa Department of Public Health was transformed into a brochure with the intent to make this information more usable and helpful for a lower literacy audience, specifically students in the IEP.

Method

We tested the original document using the SMOG test, a reading assessment tool, and Microsoft Word’s Flesch-Kincaid readability test. A Health Literacy Load Analysis was performed on the original document, looking for problems with the four domains of literacy: fundamental, scientific, civic, and cultural. We also met with IEP students to receive their feedback on the first draft of our brochure.

Conclusions

We found that simplified language formatted into bullet points and images of reference made the document more understandable to our audience. In order to make this text more effective we removed charts due to the IEP students’ low chart literacy. We can conclude that simple and concise language, organized in a directive manner, is more effective in making health literature accessible and understandable to those with lower literacy levels.

Results

A complex document was transformed into an understandable brochure for our target audience. Because the original document required significant knowledge in all four of the literacy domains, we simplified these domains to make the document easier for the IEP students to read and understand.

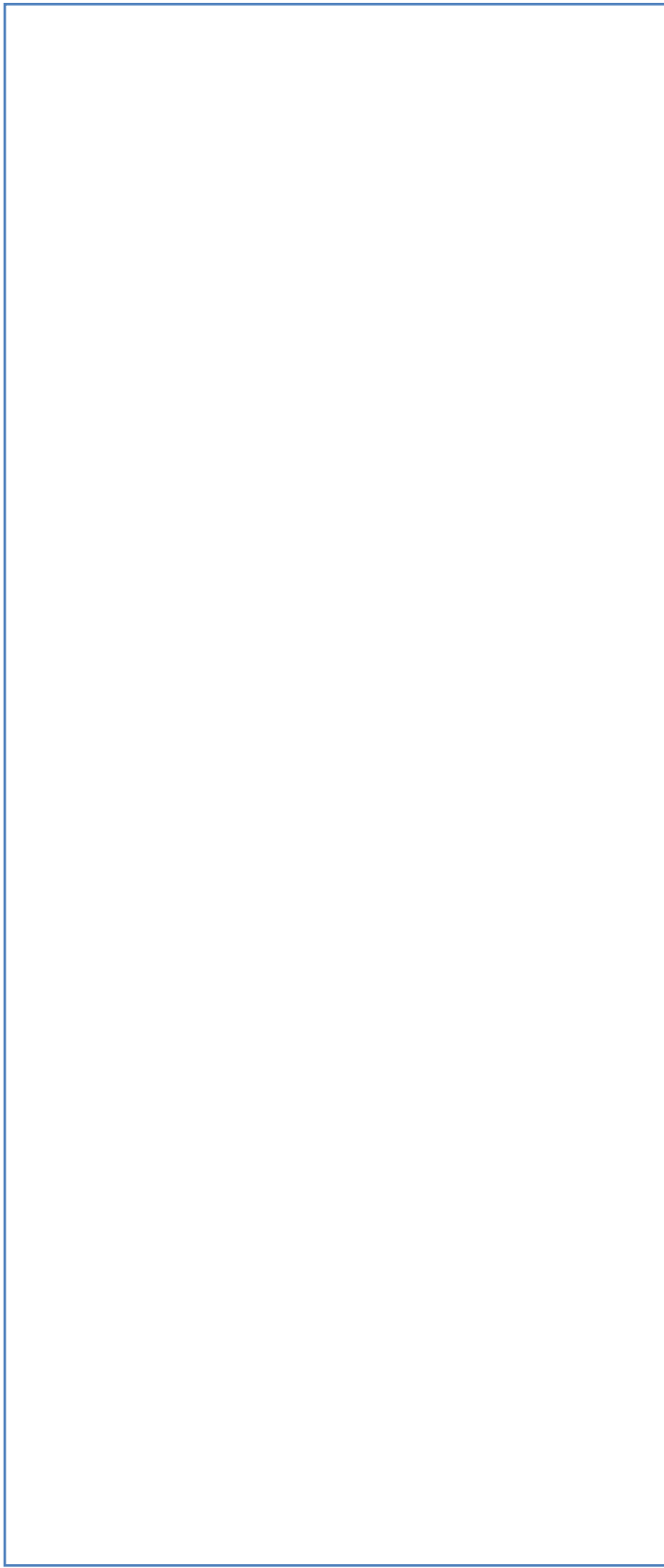
Original Document:



Reading Level

	Original Document	Our Revised Brochure
SMOG	11 th grade	6 th grade
Flesch-Kincaid	11 th grade	3 rd grade

Our Brochure:



References

Iowa Department of Public Health. (2016). *Fact Sheet: Influenza General Public*. Des Moines: Iowa.gov
Zarcadoolas, Christina, Andrew F. Pleasant, and David S. Greer. *Advancing Health Literacy: A Framework for Understanding and Action*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2006. 243-61.